

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6864

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 00243

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: EGEN, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: EC REGIONAL FUND: ANGLO-GERMAN DIFFERENCES

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE JANUARY 3 MEETING IN LONDON BETWEEN FRG STATE SECRETARY APEL AND THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY SIR ALEC DOUGLAS HOME WAS MUCH BETTER THAN THAT OF THE PRE-CHRISTMAS MEETING OF THE EC COUNCIL. ALTHOUGH THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE UK AND THE FRG OVER THE SIZE OF THE EC REGIONAL FUND ARE STILL NOT.RESOLVED, FCO OFFICIALS SAY THEY NOW AT LEAST UNDERSTAND WHAT THE GERMANS ARE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH. END SUMMARY.

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1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH ECONCOMMIN ON JANUARY 4,

OLIVER WRIGHT (DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY, FCO) SAID THAT THE GERMANS HAVE NOW MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEIR BASIC OBJECTION TO THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL IS THE FACT THAT IT WOULD PROVIDE REGIONAL ASSISTANCE TO FRANCE, WHICH THEY CONSIDER TO BE ONE OF THE RICHEST COUNTRIES IN THE COMMUNITY. THE GERMANS CLAIM THAT UNDER THEIR PROPOSAL, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR A SMALLER OVERALL REGIONAL ASSISTANCE FUND, THE DESERVING MEMBER STATES (THE UK, ITALY AND IRELAND) WOULD END UP WITH THE SAME AMOUNT AS THEY WOULD RECEIVE UNDER THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL FOR A MUCH LARGER FUND TO BE SHARED BY FRANCE AND OTHERS.

2. ACCORDING TO WRIGHT, THE BRITISH ARE PUZZLED THAT THE FRG DID NOT MAKE CLEAR ITS OBJECTIONS TO THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS EARLIER, RATHER THAN APPEARING TO HAGGLE OVER THE SIZE OF THE GERMAN CONTRIBUTION. IN ADDITION TO CONFUSING THE BRITISH, THE ORIGINAL GERMAN TACTICS DELAYED THE COUNCIL'S DECISION, MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO WORK OUT A COMPROMISE IN TIME FOR THE END-OF-YEAR DEADLINE.

3. COMMENT: THIS BELATED GERMAN CLARIFICATION COULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE COUNCIL TO ARRIVE AT A COMPROMISE AT ITS JANUARY 14-15 MEETING.

SOHM

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